

Ex-Hitlerite May Head Bonn Spies

BONN, Aug. 24 (AP).—A behind-the-scenes battle is raging here over the mysterious figure of former Nazi Lt. Gen. Reinhard Gehlen. The prize at stake is control of the West German security service.

The sensational desertion to the Communists of Federal security chief Dr. Otto John set off this struggle within Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's government.

The outcome is considered so vital that many of the highest figures in the Adenauer administration are reported lining up with pro-Gehlen or anti-Gehlen forces.

Former chief of Hitler's intelligence service on the Russian front, Gehlen heads an American-financed international spy network.

He was considered certain to get the top intelligence job soon after Dr. John deserted on July 20. The key post of director of the West German F. B. I. became vacant and the way was cleared for a shakeup of the West German espionage service in preparation for rearmament.

But opposition to Gehlen has developed among some influential government officials because he has worked for the Americans. They stress that the next intelligence chief should not be closely identified with any of the Allied powers. Dr. John was a war-time British agent.